

CALIFORNIA OCCUPATIONAL GUIDES

PSYCHOLOGISTS (CLINICAL, COUNSELING, AND SCHOOL)

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INTEREST AREA
INVESTIGATIVE/SOCIAL



WHAT DOES A PSYCHOLOGIST DO?

Why people do the things they do is an age-old question. PSYCHOLOGISTS study two critical relationships: one between brain function and behavior, and one between the environment and behavior. They study both normal and abnormal behavior and also treat patients with mental and emotional problems.

Psychologists help people identify their problems, figure out ways to best cope with them, change behaviors or habits, and develop their highest potential. They provide mental health care to individuals or groups who suffer from such disorders or conditions as depression, stress, chronic pain, substance abuse, anxiety, and phobias. Psychologists who do research investigate the physical, mental,

emotional, or social aspects of human behavior, and are in the forefront of studies to alleviate or reduce mental and emotional disorders.

Psychologists may work with business executives, performers, and athletes to combat stress and improve performance. They advise lawyers on jury selection and collaborate with educators on school reform. They show up immediately following a disaster such as a plane crash or bombing to help victims and bystanders recover from the trauma or shock of the event. Psychologists are involved in all aspects of our lives.

The American Psychological Association identifies more than 50 specialties within the field of psychology. Psychologists usually work in one of the following four broad areas of expertise:

Clinical Psychologists

Clinical Psychologists, who make up the largest specialty in the field, usually work in counseling centers, independent or group practices, hospitals, or clinics. Their clients include children, adolescents, adults, the elderly, families, and groups of individuals with similar problems. They perform the following tasks:

- Diagnose or evaluate mental and emotional disorders of individuals, and administer programs of treatment such as psychotherapy, behavior modification, hypnosis, stress reduction therapy, psychodrama, and play therapy.
- Develop treatment plans, including type, frequency, intensity, and duration of therapy, in collaboration with psychiatrists and other specialists.
- Collect and analyze information to assess client problems, determine advisability of counseling, and refer client to other specialists, institutions, or support services.

- Assist clients to gain insight, define goals, and plan action to achieve effective personal, social, educational, and vocational development and adjustment.
- Help medical and surgical patients deal with illnesses or injuries.
- Conduct individual and group counseling sessions regarding psychological or emotional problems, such as stress, substance abuse, and family situations.
- Respond to client reactions, evaluate effectiveness of counseling or treatment, and modify plan as needed.
- Treat patients who have injuries, chronic pain, stroke, arthritis, and neurological conditions in physical rehabilitation settings.
- Consult reference material, such as textbooks, manuals, and journals, to identify symptoms, make diagnoses, and develop approach to treatment.
- Plan, supervise, and conduct psychological research in fields such as personality development, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental disorders.
- Develop, direct, and evaluate activities of psychological staff and student interns engaged in patient evaluation and treatment in psychiatric facility.
- Provide psychological services and advice to private firms and community agencies on individual cases or mental health programs.

Counseling Psychologists

Counseling Psychologists use various techniques, including interviewing and testing, to advise people on how to deal with problems of everyday living. They work in settings such as university counseling centers, hospitals, and individual or group practices, doing some or all of the following tasks:

- Counsel clients to assist them in understanding personal or interactive problems, defining goals, and developing realistic action plans.
- Collect information about individuals or clients, using interviews, case histories, observational techniques, and other assessment methods.
- Develop therapeutic and treatment plans based on individual interests, abilities, or needs of clients.
- Select, administer, or interpret psychological tests to assess intelligence, aptitude, ability, or interests.
- Advise clients on the potential benefits of counseling or make referrals to specialists or other institutions for non-counseling problems.
- Analyze data, such as interview notes, test results, and reference manuals and texts to identify symptoms and diagnose the nature of client's problems.
- Evaluate results of counseling methods to determine the reliability and validity of treatments.
- Consult with other professionals to discuss therapy or treatment, counseling resources or techniques, and to share occupational information.
- Conduct research to develop or improve diagnostic or therapeutic counseling techniques.

Industrial-Organizational Psychologists

Industrial-organizational (I/O) Psychologists apply psychological principles and research methods to the workplace. The heart of their work is to do the following:

- Help employers deal with employees fairly.
- Help make jobs more interesting and satisfying.
- Help workers be more productive.

They frequently act as consultants brought in by management in order to solve a particular problem. Some of their day-to-day tasks include the following:

- Analyze job requirements to establish criteria for classification, selection, training, and other related personnel functions.
- Observe and interview workers to identify the physical, mental, and educational requirements of job.
- Develop interview techniques, rating scales, and psychological tests to assess skills, abilities, and interests as aids in selection, placement and promotion.

- Conduct research studies of physical work environments, organizational structure, communication systems, group interaction, morale, and motivation to assess organizational functioning.
- Plan, develop, and organize training programs, applying principles of learning and individual differences.
- Analyze data, using statistical methods and applications, to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of program implementation or training.
- Advise management in strategic changes to personnel, managerial, and marketing policies and practices to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency.
- Study consumer reaction to new products and package designs, using surveys and tests, and measure the effectiveness of advertising media.

The American Psychological Association fully describes 14 major sub-fields in Psychology on its Web site, which can be accessed at www.apa.org/pi/oema/careers/book1/subfields.html. Other common sub-fields within psychology include the following:

- *Cognitive and Psycholinguistic Psychologists*
- *Community Psychologists*
- *Developmental Psychologists*
- *Environmental Psychologists*
- *Experimental or Research Psychologists*
- *Geropsychologists*
- *Health Psychologists*
- *Neuropsychologists*
- *Psychometric and Quantitative Psychologists*
- *Social Psychologists*

Occasionally Psychologists use the title "Psychotherapist"; more often, licensed clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and those completing clinical internships use this title.

School and Educational Psychologists

School and Educational Psychologists determine the special needs of students, help students adjust to conflict, and make learning easier.

These professionals are often included in the broad occupational group Psychologists. However, the tasks and education requirements for School and Educational Psychologists differ significantly from Clinical and Counseling Psychologists. School Psychologists generally work for school districts and must be credentialed through the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC). Educational Psychologists work in private practice, must also be credentialed by CCTC, and are licensed by the Board of Behavioral Sciences.

School and Educational Psychologists perform the following tasks:

- Evaluate needs, limitations, and potentials of a child, through observation, review of school records, and consultation with parents and school personnel.
- Develop behavior plans for individual students.
- Help determine the most appropriate (and least restrictive) environment for special education students.
- Conduct crisis response in cases of death or dying, suicide, self-injurious behavior, or campus violence.
- Act as administrator for Individual Educational Program (IEP) meetings.
- Teach staff members on special education law, disabilities, and educational practices.
- Research educational problems, such as motivation, adjustment, teacher training, and individual differences in mental abilities.
- Conduct research to aid introduction of programs in schools to meet current psychological, educational, and sociological needs of children.
- Investigate traits, attitudes, and feelings of teachers to predict conditions that affect teacher's mental health and success with students.
- Devise achievement, diagnostic, and predictive tests to aid teachers in planning methods and content of instruction.
- Administer standardized tests to evaluate intelligence, achievement, and personality and to diagnose disabilities and difficulties among students.

- Interpret and explain test results to teachers, counselors, students, and other entitled parties.
- Plan remedial classes and testing programs designed to meet needs of special students.
- Advise school personnel on methods to enhance school and classroom atmosphere to maximize student learning and motivation.
- Analyze traits and adjustment needs of students having various mental or emotional disabilities and recommend educational programs to promote maximum adjustment.

WHAT SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT?

Important skills, knowledge, and abilities for Psychologists include:

- Active Listening – Listening to what other people are saying and asking questions as appropriate.
- Psychology – Knowledge of human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality, and interests; learning and motivation; psychological research methods; and the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.
- Therapy and Counseling – Knowledge of principles, methods, and procedures for diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of physical and mental dysfunctions, and for career counseling and guidance.
- Oral Expression – The ability to communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
- Written Comprehension – The ability to read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
- Problem Identification – Identifying the nature of problems.
- Social Perceptiveness – Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react the way they do.
- Identification of Key Causes – Identifying the things that must be changed to achieve a goal.
- Information Gathering – Knowing how to find information and identifying essential information.

WHAT'S THE WORK ENVIRONMENT?

A Psychologist's specialty and place of employment determine the work environment. Psychologists work in hospitals, schools, industries, correctional institutions, public agencies, counseling centers, community mental health centers, research organizations, private offices, or any combination of these. They frequently work under pressure and must be able to cope objectively with client emotions, mood swings, or tension without losing perspective and judgment.

Psychologists employed as faculty by colleges and universities divide their time between teaching and research and may also have administrative responsibilities. Many have part-time consulting practices. Most Psychologists in government and industry have structured schedules. These Psychologists experience stress due to deadlines, tight schedules, and overtime work. Their routines may be interrupted frequently. Travel is required for conferences, meetings, and field research.

Union Membership

Generally, Psychologists are not members of unions.

WHAT'S THE CALIFORNIA JOB OUTLOOK?

The following information is from the occupational projections produced by the Employment Development Department (EDD) Labor Market Information Division (LMID):

Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists

Estimated number of workers in 2002:	12,400
Estimated number of workers in 2012:	15,700
Projected Growth 2002-2012:	26.6%
Est. openings due to separations by 2012:	2,700

These figures do not include self-employment.

Nationally, more than four out of ten Psychologists are self-employed, bringing the estimated number of working Psychologists in California close to 20,700. Additionally, there were 2,300 Psychologists working primarily in post-secondary education in California in 2002. An average 150 additional faculty positions are expected annually due to new and replacement needs by 2012.

There will be a total of 6,000 job opportunities in this occupation from 2002 through 2012. This occupation will grow faster than average compared with all occupations in California through 2012. New jobs will account for most employment opportunities, but openings will also occur as Psychologists retire or leave the field for other kinds of work.

Trends

Employment prospects for Psychologists in colleges and universities should improve somewhat due to an expected wave of retirements among college faculty over the next several years. However, due to current budget constraints in California's higher education, some of these replacement positions could be eliminated. In the health care industry, jobs should remain strong due to the aging population.

Persons holding doctorates from universities in areas with an applied emphasis, such as clinical, counseling, health, and educational psychology should have particularly good prospects. Psychologists with extensive training in quantitative research methods and computer science may have a competitive edge over applicants without this background.

WHAT DOES THE JOB PAY?

California Earnings

The following information is from the Occupational Employment Statistics Survey of Employers by EDD/LMID:

Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists 2005 Wages

Hourly wages range from	\$25.48	to	\$44.16
Average hourly wage	\$36.97		
Average annual wage	\$76,903		

These figures do not include self-employment.

The earnings of Psychologists depend on education, years of experience, and specialty. The above wages do not include those of self-employed Psychologists, which can be much higher in private practice. The average annual wage for teachers of Psychology in California colleges and universities was \$71,253 in 2005.

Hours

Psychologists in private practice or in university settings work flexible hours, including evening and weekend appointments to serve their clients. However, in schools, clinics, or government agencies Psychologists generally work a set schedule.

Benefits

Salaried Psychologists usually enjoy vacation and sick leave, health, vision, dental insurance, and retirement plans.

HOW DO I PREPARE FOR THE JOB?

Aspiring Psychologists must be emotionally stable and able to communicate effectively with people. Sensitivity, compassion, and the ability to lead and inspire others are particularly important qualities for clinical work and counseling. Patience and perseverance are vital qualities because results from psychological treatment of patients or from research usually take a long time. Research Psychologists should be able to work independently and as part of a team.

Education and Training

Clinical, Counseling, and Organizational Psychologists

A doctorate (Ph.D.) is the minimum educational requirement for licensure in California. This requires at least four years of integrated graduate study, field experience, and an original research dissertation. Very high standards are required for admission to any of the programs accredited by the American Psychological Association.

Those who earn master's degrees in Psychology often collect data and work on research studies in universities, government, and private companies. Others find jobs in health, industry, and education.

High school and college students who are pursuing this career should take psychology, social science, physical science, biology, humanities, and statistics courses. They can also take advantage of the vast amount of information available through regional chapters of the California Psychological Associations.

School Psychologists and Licensed Educational Psychologists

Both of these specialties require a bachelor's degree, two years of post-baccalaureate coursework, plus specialized advanced training in the form of internships and practicum.

To locate educational programs for Psychologists use www.cpec.ca.gov/collegeguide/collegeguide.asp.

Licensing and Certification

The State of California requires all Clinical Psychologists to be licensed by the California Board of Psychology. In addition to the doctoral degree, they must have completed 3,000 hours of supervised professional experience - 1,500 of these hours must be after completion of the Ph.D. and under the direction of two different supervisors. Licenses must be renewed every two years. For detailed information on requirements to practice as a Clinical Psychologist in California, contact the Board of Psychology at the Web site or addresses listed below.

School Psychologists must obtain a Pupil Personnel Services Credential from the California Commission for Teacher Credentialing (CCTC). To do this requires two years of study beyond a bachelor's degree, recommendation from an approved program in school psychology, and a passing rate on the CBEST exam.

Educational Psychologists must be licensed through the Board of Behavioral Sciences and credentialed through CCTC. In addition to the formal education requirements, this Board requires proof of three years of full-time experience as a credentialed School Psychologist in public schools, a one-year supervised experience with a licensed Educational Psychologist or as a School Psychologist intern, and a passing rate on a written exam.

Continuing Education

License renewal for Psychologists requires at least 36 hours of continuing education coursework within the two-year period. The Mandatory Continuing Education for Psychologists Accrediting Agency administers the continuing education program for

the Board of Psychology, and maintains a list of approved training providers for Psychologists to assist them in planning their renewal process. This list can be accessed at www.calpsychlink.org.

HOW DO I FIND THE JOB?

Experienced Psychologists find jobs through professional publications and by networking at conventions of professional organizations. Personal contacts and an individual's reputation are often the best routes to jobs at all levels in this field. Employers also recruit through psychology departments of colleges, universities, and training hospitals. Government agencies hire through the usual civil service application/examination process.

Those with bachelors or master's degrees can find jobs as assistants in rehabilitation centers or in other jobs involving data collection and analysis. Those who meet credential requirements may become high school psychology teachers.

Positions may also be found by contacting hospitals, schools, correctional institutions, public agencies, counseling centers, community mental health centers, and research organizations. School Psychologists find jobs through school district offices and their alma mater. Private firms are listed in the yellow pages under Psychologists.

The following Internet resources can be helpful to the job search process:

America's Career InfoNet
www.acinet.org

America's Job Bank
www.ajb.dni.us

CalJOBSSM
www.caljobs.ca.gov

Job Search and Resume Writing
www.worksmart.ca.gov/success_tips_menu.html

Local Job Service Offices
www.edd.ca.gov/jsrep/jsloc.htm

Occupational Information Network (O*NET) Online
<http://online.onetcenter.org>

One-Stop Career Centers List
www.edd.ca.gov/ONE-STOP/pic.htm

For statewide and local projections, wages, employers by county, and other occupational information go to www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov and select *Find an Occupation Profile*.

WHERE CAN THE JOB LEAD?

There are many opportunities for advancement in the field of psychology. Psychologists in academic positions may move up the university administration ladder to department chair, dean, or president. Psychologists working in federal government may be promoted to management positions in such agencies as the National Institute of Mental Health and the National Institute of Drug and Alcohol Abuse. Many Psychologists work as consultants, do contract research, or provide industrial/organizational services. Some start their own firms.

OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

California Board of Psychology
 1422 Howe Avenue, Suite 22
 Sacramento, CA 95825
 (916) 263-2699
www.psychboard.ca.gov

California Psychological Association
 1022 G Street
 Sacramento, CA 95814
 (916) 325-9786
www.calpsychlink.org

For information on School and Educational Psychologists:

Commission on Teacher Credentialing
 1900 Capitol Avenue
 Sacramento, CA 95814
 (916) 445-7254
www.ctc.ca.gov

California Association of School Psychologists
 1400 K Street Suite 311
 Sacramento, CA 95814
 (916) 444-1595
www.casponline.org

California Association of Licensed Educational Psychologists
 P.O. Box 387
 Aptos, CA 95001
 (831) 687-0757
www.CALEP.com

Information about other state licensing requirements is available from:

Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards
 P.O. Box 241245
 Montgomery, AL 36124-1245
 (334) 832-4580
www.asppb.org

RELATED OCCUPATIONAL GUIDES

Psychiatric Technicians	No. 95
Social Workers	No. 122
Counselors, Rehabilitation and School	No. 429

OCCUPATIONAL CODE REFERENCES

SOC (<i>Standard Occupational Classification</i>)	
Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists	19-3031
Psychology Teachers, Postsecondary	25-1066

O*NET (<i>Occupational Information Network</i>)	
Clinical Psychologists	19-3031.02
Counseling Psychologists	19-3031.03
Educational Psychologists	19-3031.01
Psychology Teachers, Postsecondary	25-1066.00
Industrial/Organizational Psychologists	19-3031.00

OES (<i>Occupational Employment Statistics</i>)	
Psychologists	27108